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ABSTRACT

This document is one of eight in a series of guides designed to help teach and counsel troubled youth. It presents 20 lessons that focus primarily on building self-esteem and learning to like oneself. The first lesson introduces students to the concept of self-esteem, the second helps students to determine their own level of self-esteem, and the third helps them to understand the causes of low self-esteem. Other lessons assist students in formulating their own opinions of themselves and in rejecting assessments based on prejudices, bias, and the opinions of others. Several lessons show students how to recognize more of their positive attributes. Two lessons teach the difference between esteem based on internal and external forces. Other lessons explain how perfectionism can adversely affect self-esteem; teach students that no one wins all the time and that setbacks do not have to undermine esteem; and encourage students to emphasize the positive about themselves. Students are also taught about self-care and how to avoid self-blame for mistakes and setbacks. One lesson explains to students that not everyone is going to like them and that this does not need to lower their self-esteem. Students are taught to accept or improve the things they do not like about themselves and to acknowledge improvements they have made in their level of esteem. One lesson notes that some beliefs about life that students hold may be inaccurate and may undermine their self-esteem. The final lesson provides information to students on how to successfully make changes and set goals. (NB)

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Breakthrough Strategies to

TEACH and COUNSEL

Troubled Youth

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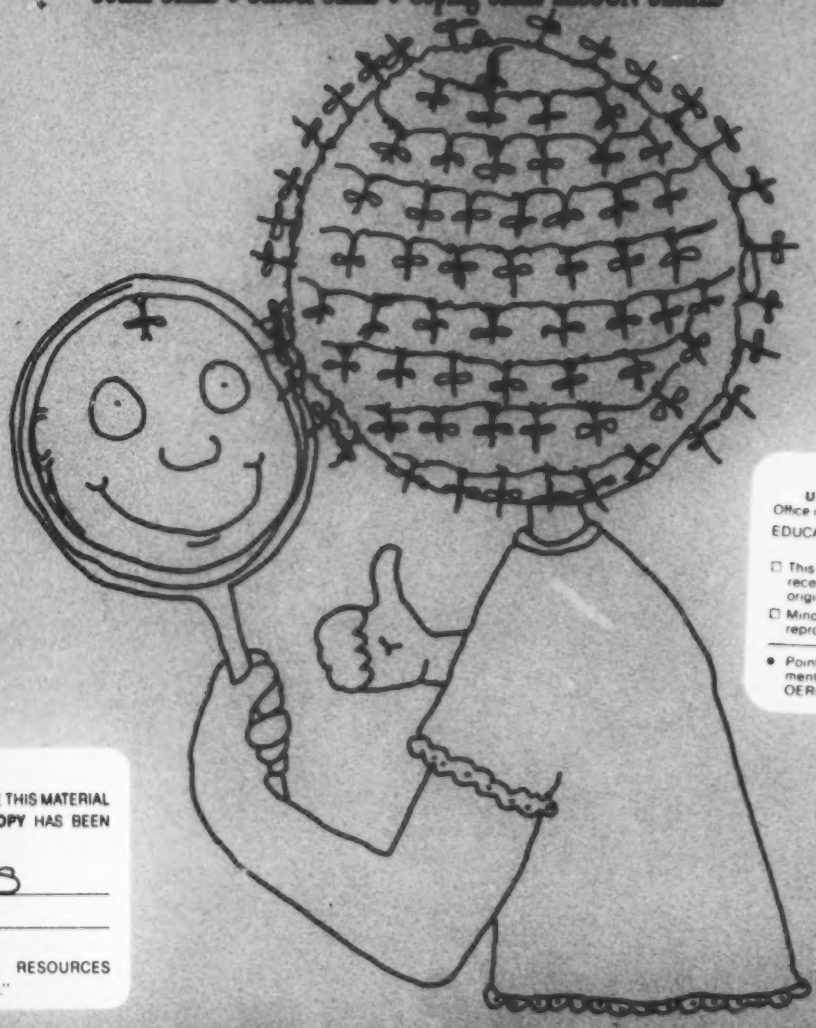

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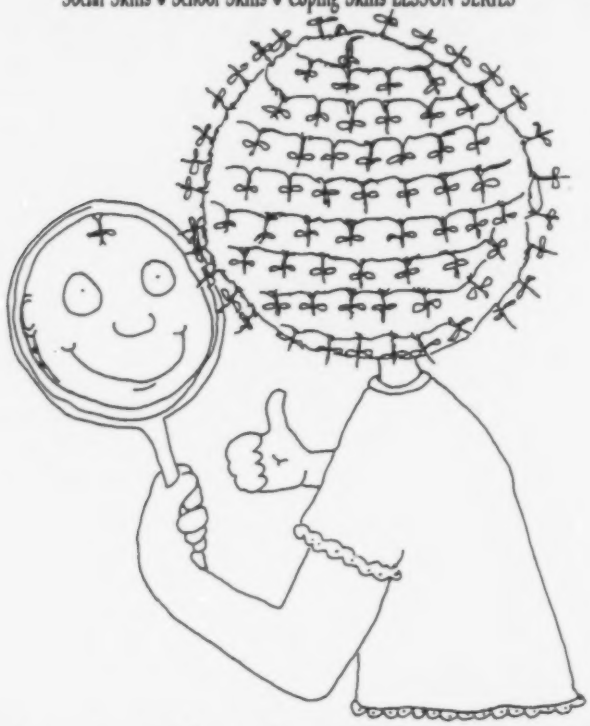

Learning to Like the Kid in the Mirror

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Coping Skills

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Lesson 1

Is Esteem More Than Just a Lot of Hot Air?

Goal: To introduce students to the concept of self esteem.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pens, one copy for each student of "Is Self-Esteem Really All That Important?."

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about esteem. **Ask** the class to define "esteem", and **assist** them to develop a definition that approximates the following: *to positively value or highly rate.* **Ask** the group to discuss their beliefs about self-esteem, and **permit** class members to make negative comments if desired.

2. ▲ **Ask** the students to identify the types of factors that people normally consider when they are formulating their opinions of their self-esteem. **Write** the students' answers on the board, and **elicit** answers such as "how well I do in sports", and "what other kids say". **Discuss** the responses with the students, **assisting** the class to determine that many factors are normally considered when people rate their own worth. **Identify** to the class that sometimes people can feel badly about themselves based on their views on just one or two factors, such as "my nose is too big" or "I'm awful in sports." **Discuss** this with the class members **assisting** them to consider the merits, consequences and accuracy of self-evaluation based on just a few factors.

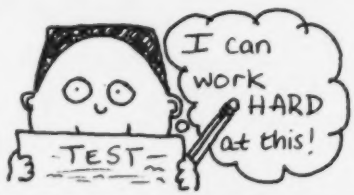
3. ▲ **Ask** the students to discuss if having positive self-esteem is important in life. **Distribute** the pens and the copies of "Is Self-Esteem Really All That Important?", and **ask** the students to complete, then discuss the forms. **Assist** the class to discover that positive self-esteem is important to success in almost any aspect of life.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **The word "esteem" is used to describe when a person positively values or highly rates him/herself.**
- **Most people determine their esteem based on many factors, such as their accomplishments, attributes, skills, etc.**
- **Sometimes people determine their esteem based on just a few factors; this can contribute to an inaccurate assessment that may be unfairly negative.**
- **Positive self-esteem is an important part of achieving success in nearly any area of life.**

Is Self-Esteem Really All That Important?

Look at the following drawings and decide if self-esteem is really all that important to living a successful life. Check "yes" or "no" by each item to show your answer.

To Succeed with Friends ❒ Yes ❒ No		
To Succeed in School ❒ Yes ❒ No		
To Succeed at Work ❒ Yes ❒ No		
To Succeed at Home ❒ Yes ❒ No		
To Succeed in Your Future ❒ Yes ❒ No		
To Succeed with Yourself ❒ Yes ❒ No		

Lesson 2

So, What Do You Think About You?

Goal: To assist students to determine their own levels of self-esteem.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, art supplies (paper, pens, markers, paint, crayons, scissors, magazines, newspapers, etc.)

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning more about their own self-appraisals. **Ask** the class to define "self-esteem", and **assist** them to develop a definition that approximates the following: *to positively value or highly rate yourself.* **Ask** the group to identify the kinds of self-appraisals people may have, and **elicit** answers that span the range of possibilities such as "I'm a pretty cool guy" to "I'm a jerk."

2. ▲ **Distribute** the art supplies and **ask** the students to create a representation of their self-esteem. These representations may be abstract drawings, poetry, collages, or utilize other methods that the students choose.

3. ▲ As appropriate, **review** the completed projects with the class. **Discuss** the projects with the students, and **include** the following issues in the discussion, as applicable:

- *Some people may rate themselves highly, while others may have mixed or negative feelings about themselves.*
- *It is normal to occasionally feel some negative feelings towards yourself, but strong, lasting, major negative feelings about yourself often indicate that you may have other problems that are helping create the bad feelings.*
- *Low self-esteem doesn't just "happen"; it almost always relates to other problems. These problems can include that you were verbally abused, hit, or not given all of the praise and support you needed.*
- *If you feel very negatively about yourself, there are ways to change how you feel. Adults such as counselors, teachers, family members and others can provide help if you ask.*
- *When you are a child or teen, your self-esteem is just being formed. If your view of yourself seems fairly negative now, keep in mind that often your view will improve as you get older and have more information upon which to base your viewpoint.*

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **The word "self-esteem" is used to describe when a person positively values or highly rates him/herself.**
- **People's ideas about their self-esteem can vary widely from feeling very positively about themselves to feeling quite negatively.**
- **It is normal to occasionally feel some negative feelings towards yourself, but strong, lasting, major negative feelings about yourself often indicate that you may have some other problems that are helping create the bad feelings.**
- **Low self-esteem doesn't just "happen"; it almost always relates to other problems. These problems can include that you were verbally abused, hit or not given all of the praise and support you needed.**
- **If you feel very negatively about yourself, there are ways to change how you feel. Adults such as counselors, teachers, family members and others can provide help if you ask.**
- **When you are a child or teen, your self-esteem is just being formed. If your view of yourself seems fairly negative now, keep in mind that often your view will improve as you get older and have more information upon which to base your viewpoint.**

Lesson 3

What Causes Low Self-Esteem?

Goal: To assist students to identify and understand the causes of low self-esteem.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pens, one copy for each student of "What Causes Low Self-Esteem?"

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about low self-esteem. **Ask** the class members to define "low self-esteem", and **assist** them to develop a definition that approximates the following: *to negatively value or poorly rate yourself.* **Ask** the group to identify the kinds of self-appraisals that people with low self-esteem may make, and **elicit** answers such as "I'm a jerk" and "I'm just an air head."

2. ▲ **Distribute** the pens and the copies of "What Causes Low Self-Esteem?" to the students, and **ask** them to complete the forms. **Discuss** the completed forms with the class, then **ask** them to list causes of low self-esteem, as suggested in the handout or based on their own experiences. **Write** their answers on the board, and **discuss**.

3. ▲ **Ask** the students to determine each of the handout character's likely level of self-esteem; for example, Mario, the character in the first situation, may decide he is a failure just like his dad says. **Write** on the board, the character's name and likely self-appraisal, as determined by the class. **Ask** the class members to determine if each of these appraisals are accurate, and **cross** out inaccurate appraisals. **Assist** the class to determine that all of the characters' low self-appraisals are inaccurate, then **assist** the students to apply this logic to themselves.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **The word "low self-esteem" is used to describe when a person negatively values or poorly rates him/herself.**
- **Low self-esteem doesn't just happen. There are causes of low self-esteem. These causes include verbal abuse, hitting, racial prejudice, cultural insensitivity, and gender bias.**
- **Low self-esteem is usually inaccurate, and is often based on others' inaccurate or prejudiced ideas about you.**

What Causes Low Self-Esteem?

The following scenarios show some of the things that can cause low esteem. If you can identify the cause, write it next to the scenario. To get you started, the first answer is shown.

Mario's sister was an excellent student and was accepted for admission to several top colleges; she's going to be a doctor. Mario got B's and a few C's throughout school and wants to be a builder. His dad is always calling Mario a failure. (Answer: Others say you are bad.)

Jacob's mom has struggled for years with pills. Sometimes she yells at him a lot, and blames him for things he had nothing to do with, things like her car not starting and her head hurting.

Lorenzo is teased by the other kids in the neighborhood. They taunt him about the curl of his hair and the dark color of his skin. None of them will play with him.

Roberta's teacher told her that she was not learning reading and math fast enough and that she will have to repeat the same grade for one more year.

"Shainoor is just a girl," Shainoor's father often tells her. When she asks for books and other school supplies, he laughs and says she'll never go to college because all she needs is an MRS. (Mrs.) degree.

Joshua was born missing parts of the fingers on both of his hands. He has a hard time tying his shoes or holding a pen. Sometimes other kids and even adults stare at him.

Paul wears glasses. Some days the other boys grab at his glasses and take them from him.

Sky is the only kid in her entire class that doesn't attend the one big church that almost everyone in town goes to. The other kids hassle her about her religion and make nasty comments about her religious beliefs.

Lonnie is having trouble finding other kids to be friends with. He hates having to walk to school alone.

Susan's family is having lots of problems that she's not allowed to tell anyone about. She is confused and scared that the other kids will find out some of the bad things that are happening.

Kyle thinks that no one else's mom stays home all day and drinks. He is embarrassed to bring anyone home for fear that they will see the messy house and Mom passed out or sick on the couch.

All the other families have nice cars, but Nicholi's family has to take the bus. Nicholi thinks that everyone is laughing at him.

Pedro has been assigned to a special education classroom. The other kids sometimes make jokes about him having to go there.

Soon-Yi is flunking algebra, and no matter how hard she studies, she can't pass the class.

Lee just came to this country from another continent, and talks with a heavy accent. Several of the other students point at him and seem to be making fun of him.

Joanne's family moves about once a year, sometimes more. She is the new kid at each school and never has time to build friendships.

Lesson 4

Whose Opinion of You Really Counts?

Goal: To assist students to formulate their own opinions of themselves.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning more about self-esteem. **Ask** the class members to identify some of the reasons that people can have low self-esteem, and **include** the following answers, but **use** phrasing that is appropriate for your students' ages, for example "verbal abuse" could be listed as "people call you mean names": *verbal abuse, overly critical parents, racial prejudice, gender bias, religious discrimination, personal handicaps, sexual abuse, neglect, insufficient support from care givers, school problems, family problems and social problems.* **Discuss** the completed lists with the students.

2. ▲ **Ask** the students to look for patterns in the list, and **aid** them to notice, for example, that many ethnic minorities and females may have low esteem, due in part to the problematic ways that members of our culture may view and treat members of these groups. Other patterns include: children from alcoholic or drug-involved families, children who are abused, children who are abandoned, religious minorities, cultural minorities, learning disabled children, children from troubled families, and physically handicapped youth. **Discuss** the identified patterns with the class, **assisting** the students to determine that these patterns reflect conditions that they have no control over, such as race, gender, age, etc., and that basing esteem on these factors, can be problematic.

3. ▲ **Ask** the students to determine what esteem "should" be based on. **Assist** the students to develop a list of characteristics that they can control, and **include** factors such as "kind to others", "peaceful" and "have a good personality." **Assist** the students to recognize that esteem should be based not on others' reactions to stereotypes, but their own assessment of self.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Low self-esteem doesn't "just happen." It has many causes including verbal abuse, overly critical parents, racial prejudice, gender bias, religious discrimination, personal handicaps, sexual abuse, neglect, insufficient support from care givers, school problems, family problems and social problems.**
- **There are groups of people that may be at risk of low self-esteem. These people are sometimes treated in ways that can help create low self-esteem. These groups can include females, cultural and ethnic minority group members, physically handicapped youth, learning disabled youth, and children who have faced serious family problems.**
- **Esteem that is based on others' ideas about you, may not be accurate. To make an accurate self-appraisal, your self-esteem should be based on your opinions, and on factors that you can control.**

Lesson 5

Deciding My Own Opinion of Me

Goal: To assist students to formulate their own opinions of themselves, and to reject assessments based on prejudice, bias, and the opinions of others.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pens, one copy for each student of "What Really is the Measure of a Young Man...or Woman? handout, pens, art supplies (paper, markers, paint, magazines, scissors, pencils.)

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning more about self-esteem. **Ask** the class members to identify some of the groups of people that may be at high risk of low self-esteem due to the problematic ways that some members of our culture may treat them. **Elicit** responses such as the physically handicapped, ethnic minority group members, new immigrants, females, etc. **Explain** that sometimes members of these groups "internalize", or come to believe some of the bad things that are said about them; this helps create low self-esteem.

▲ **Distribute** the pens and the copies of the "What Really is the Measure of a Young Man...or Woman?" handout, and **ask** the students to complete the form as indicated in the handout directions. **Discuss** the completed form with the class, **assisting** the students to recognize that judging oneself or others based on factors such as skin color, eye shape or gender, is inaccurate.

2. ▲ **Ask** the students to rewrite the handout by substituting better criteria than the factors shown. **Write** the improved items on the board, and **include** factors such as attitude, personality, accomplishments, disposition, hopes, dreams, etc. **Discuss** the rewritten forms with the class, **assisting** the students to consider using these items as the basis for evaluating their self-esteem.

3. ▲ **Ask** the students to create pictures that show how a person from a high risk group might feel before about him or herself "before and after." The "before" picture should portray how the person felt when they internalized some of the inaccurate assessments of others. The "after" picture should show how the person sees him or herself after using the revised, valid factors. **Discuss** and **display** the completed pictures.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Some groups of people may be especially at risk of low self-esteem because they may be viewed and treated quite negatively by others. These groups include ethnic minority group members, new immigrants and females.**
- **Some members of groups who are often treated negatively by others, may come to internalize or believe some of the bad things that are said about them. This contributes to the development of low self-esteem.**
- **Judging yourself or others on the basis of such factors as skin color, eye shape or gender, is inaccurate. There is much more to people than a few superficial characteristics.**

What Really is the Measure of a Young Man...or Woman?

Some groups of people may be especially at risk of having low self-esteem. In our culture, some groups of people, such as ethnic minorities may be treated in very negative ways. Members of these groups may notice a lot of negative things being said or done to them, and may come to "internalize" or begin to believe some of the negative things they hear. To help you sort out if there is any truth to the negative assessments made by others, decide if the following factors are complete, accurate and valid ways to rate a person. Fill in the blanks at the bottom of the page with two more factors you've heard, said or believed.

The factors upon which members of some groups are sometimes judged by others, and may come to believe...	**Can you ACCURATELY and FULLY measure a person's worth based on this?**	**Does this REALLY have anything to do with a person's worth?**
The color of your skin		
The language you use		
Where your relatives came from		
Your culture's beliefs		
Your gender		
If you use a wheel chair		
If you wear glasses		
If you attend a special class		
If you are new to this country		
Your religion		
The shape of your eyes		
Your accent		
Your cultural traditions		
If you walk with a limp		
If your mom has a drinking problem		
That your dad doesn't live with you		
That your family is poor		
That you have a lisp		

Lesson 6

So What's So Good About Me?

Goal: To assist students to recognize more of their positive attributes.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pens, one copy for each student of "A Self-Esteem Scavenger Hunt Checklist" handout, art supplies (paper, poster board, newspaper, scissors, glue, tape, markers, pencils, etc.)

1. ▲ Inform the students that they will be learning to notice their positive qualities. **Distribute** "A Self-Esteem Scavenger Hunt Checklist" to the class members, and **review** the instructions as shown on the form, then **ask** the students to complete the handout. **Discuss** the completed forms with the class, and **assist** the students to discuss one category at a time. **Ask** the students to direct their comments to the peer they are discussing, using phrases such as "I picked you for 'good listener' because you are always patient when people are talking." **Assist** the students to hear and acknowledge feedback by saying "thank-you" or otherwise acknowledging it.

2. ▲ Ask each of the students to identify if the feedback received was different from the way they view themselves. **Assist** the students to discover that it is normal to have differences in their self-view from the views of them that are held by others. **Discuss** the following points, as applicable, during the discussion:

- *Sometimes we see ourselves in a much harsher light than others may view us.*
- *Sometimes we overlook some of our own good qualities.*
- *It can be hard to admit some of the positive things about ourselves if we're more used to hearing negatives.*
- *It can be easier to label ourselves as either very good or very bad rather than find a more balanced viewpoint that is somewhere in the middle, and a lot more accurate.*
- *All of us have both good and bad qualities. That's normal.*

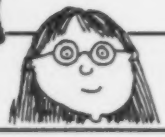
3. ▲ Ask the students to create pictures that show how others view them vs. their own views of their selves. As appropriate, **discuss** and **display** the completed pictures.

4. ▲ Review the major points of this lesson:

- **It is normal to have differences between your self-view and the views that others have of you.**
- **Sometimes we see ourselves in a much harsher light than others may view us.**
- **Sometimes we overlook some of our own good qualities.**
- **It can be hard to admit some of the positive things about ourselves if we're more used to hearing negatives.**
- **It can be easier to label ourselves as either very good or very bad rather than find a more balanced viewpoint that is somewhere in the middle, and a lot more accurate.**
- **All of us have both good and bad qualities. That's normal.**

A Self-Esteem Scavenger Hunt Checklist

Find the student in your class who best fits each of the following phrases, then write that person's name in the space next to the phrase. Also, add in two more categories in the blank spaces at the bottom, and find the students who best fit these categories. If you can, use each student's name at least once.

Calm	
Good listener	
Good leader	
Good athlete	
Great sense of humor	
Patient 	
Good student	
Kind	
Artistic	
Hard worker	
Responsible	
Good team player	
_____	
_____	

Lesson 7

The Two Sources of Self-Esteem

Goal: To assist students to learn that esteem can be based on internal and external forces, and that self-evaluation that is heavily based on external events is more fragile and transient than esteem based on internal forces.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, a large tub or dish pan of water, a toy sail boat or other toy that can float on the water.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about the two sources of self-esteem. **Ask** the students to list some of the items that people base their esteem upon. **Elicit** answers such as "my grades" and "how many touchdowns I make at the big game." **Write** the students' responses on the board, then **ask** them to sort the completed list into "internal" and "external" factors. **Define** external factors as events, accomplishments and actions that happen outside of a person, such as winning a contest or passing an exam. **Define** internal factors as occurring inside a person, such as feeling pride and happiness. **Discuss** the sorted list with the class, and **assist** them to see that often external factors are used as the source of esteem.

2. ▲ **Inform** the class that they will be examining the concerns that can occur when a person's esteem is primarily based on external factors. **Assist** the students to identify some of these concerns by reviewing the following statements and stating the esteem problems that could occur:

- I'll stop hating myself and my life only if Shawn asks me out on a date.
- Unless I pass that test, I'm going to feel like a total idiot.
- I'm going to be miserable and never get out of bed unless I find someone to go out with Saturday night.
- If I don't get that job, I'm going to be so ashamed and embarrassed that I won't be able to face anyone.
- If I get that award, then I'll feel like finally I'm somebody.
- If David breaks up with me, I'm gonna be worth nothin'.

▲ **Assist** the students to notice that they can not control external events, actions and people, and their self-esteem will rise and fall based on the actions and decisions of others.

3. ▲ **Display** the pan of water and toy boat, and **inform** the students that these items can be used to show the way it can feel when a person relies heavily on external forces to determine their own self-worth. To show the force of external factors, **create** a wave that rocks or tips the boat from across the tub, and **note** that the boat is controlled from afar, not from within. **Ask** the students to notice if they ever feel like their life is out of their control and that they are as helpless as a sail boat, subject to the up's and down's of what is happening around them. **Discuss** with the class that by learning to rely more on enduring, internal appraisals rather than minute-to-minute external victories, accomplishments and events, they can maintain more of an "even keel" in how they feel about themselves.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Some people base their self-esteem mostly on external factors. External factors are events, accomplishments and actions that happen outside of a person.**
- **Self-esteem can also be based on internal factors. Internal factors are things that occur inside a person, such as feeling pride and happiness.**
- **We can not control external events, actions and people. If your self-esteem is heavily based on external factors, your self-worth will rise and fall based on the actions and decisions of others, and will seem to not be in your control.**
- **When your esteem is heavily based on external factors, your life may often feel out of control, as though you were being bounced around. By relying more on enduring, internal appraisals rather than minute-to-minute external victories, accomplishments and events, you can maintain more of an "even keel" in how you feel about yourself.**

Lesson 8

Building Esteem is an Inside Job

Goal: To assist students to learn that esteem can be based on internal and external forces, and that self-evaluation that is heavily based on external events is more fragile and transient than esteem based on internal forces; to aid students to consider cultivating self-esteem based on internal factors.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, paper, pens.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about building esteem. **Distribute** the pens and paper, then **ask** the students to write (or draw) the things that their own personal esteem is based on. After, the lists are complete, **inform** the students that there are two main sources of self-esteem: internal and external. **Define** external factors as events, accomplishments and actions that happen outside of a person, such as winning a contest or passing an exam. **Define** internal factors as occurring inside a person, such as feeling pride and happiness. **Assist** the students to suggest other examples of internal and external sources of esteem. **Assist** the class members to sort their completed lists into external and internal factors, and to determine if their esteem is based more on internal or external factors.

2. ▲ **Discuss** with the class that esteem that is mostly based on external factors, can be problematic because the control rests outside the person. **Identify** to the students that internal factors can be more stable and consistent than external ones because internal factors are within the person's control and power. **Assist** the class to discuss the problems likely to be experienced by people with externally-based esteem, whose feelings about themselves may rise and fall with their grades, income, dates, and sports success. **Assist** the students to identify how their own esteem can be affected by external factors.

3. ▲ **Assist** the students to re-write their lists of sources of esteem by modifying the external factors to become more moderate or more related to internal factors. For example, a student who wrote that her esteem was based on "winning the state track meet" could change that to "being the best runner I can" or "being the most committed runner I can," which are two factors she can control, while winning is not necessarily within her power. **Discuss** the re-written lists with the class, **assisting** the students to recognize that their revised factors give them more control and power over the way they feel about themselves, and create more stability. **Note** that depression often stems from feelings of powerlessness, and that moderating reliance on external factors as sources of esteem, could be especially important for students who struggle with depression.

▲ **Discuss** how the students can also modify the way they think and talk about esteem, for example, rewording and rethinking comments such as "I'm gonna be nothing if I don't win that race" to "I'm going to prepare completely for that race."

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **There are two main sources of esteem: internal and external factors.**
- **Esteem can be based on external factors, which are events, accomplishments and actions that happen outside of a person.**
- **Esteem can be based on internal factors, which occur inside a person.**
- **Esteem that is heavily based on external factors, can leave you feeling as though you have no control because the control rests with people, events and actions outside of your control.**
- **The way people think and talk about esteem can improve or worsen how they feel. Saying or thinking "I'm a fool if I don't win," may not be as helpful as "I'm going to prepare completely to do all I can to win that race."**
- **Depression often stems from feelings of helplessness and powerlessness. If you struggle with depression, moderating your reliance on external factors as sources of esteem, could be especially important.**

Lesson 9

Three Cheers for Me!

Goal: To assist students to recognize, acknowledge and remember more of their positive attributes.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pens, one copy for each student of "The New Champion" handout.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about their positive qualities. **Distribute** the paper and pens. **Ask** the students to divide up into pairs, then **ask** each student in each pair to write (or draw) some of the best qualities of the other student in their group. **Ask** the students to exchange and discuss the completed lists. **Ask** each pair to share their lists with the class.

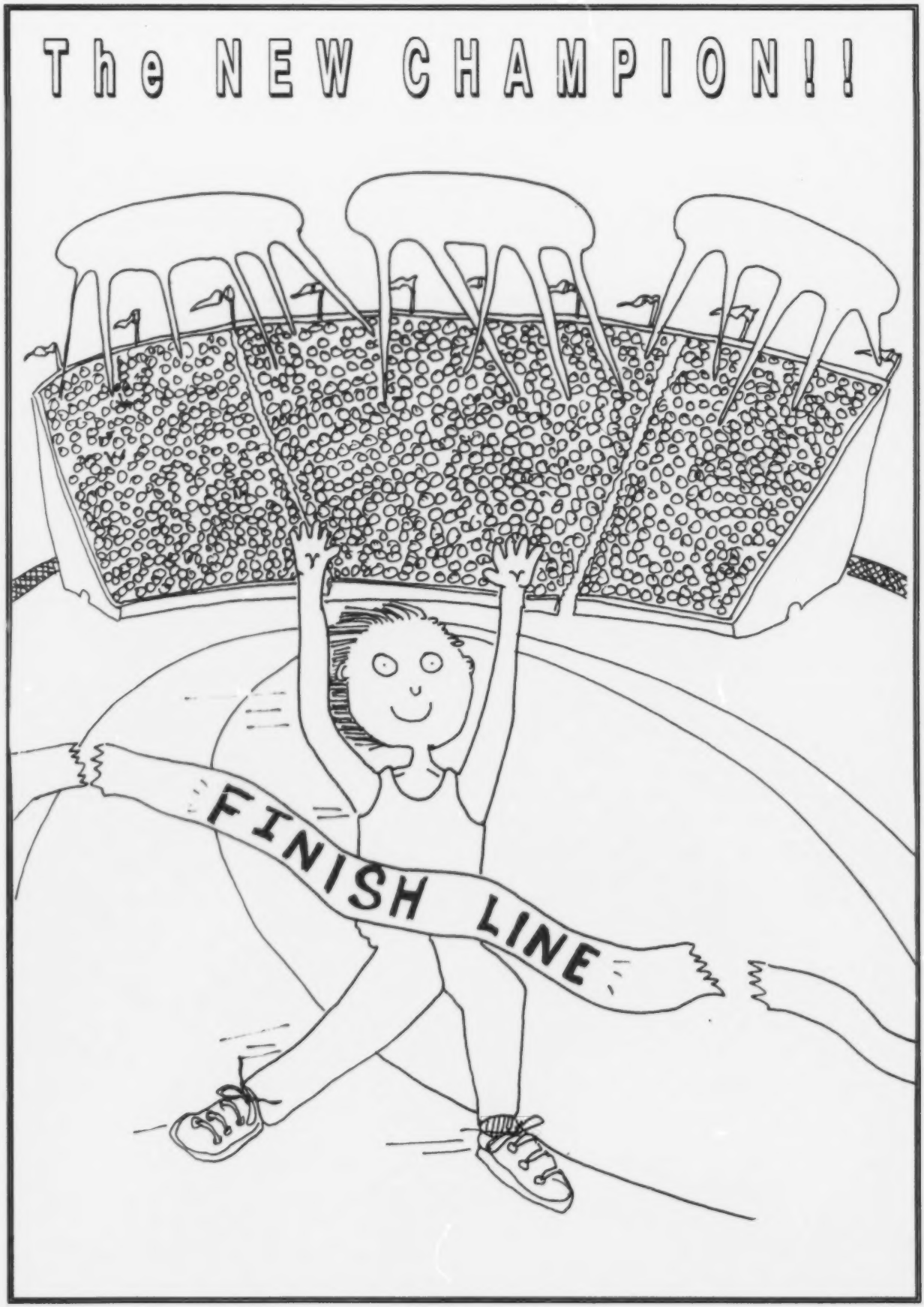
2. ▲ **Distribute** the copies of "The New Champion" handout, and **ask** the students to draw and write in additional details to personalize the handout to be about each of them. **Remind** the students that they can refer to the lists of their best qualities that they developed in the pair groups, if they need help or ideas. **Ask** the students to display and discuss their completed handouts.

3. ▲ **Assist** the students to discuss how they could live day to day so they could feel more like champions, and **elicit** answers such as "I could stop feeling like a loser" or "I could remember all the good things about me."

▲ **Discuss** with the students where they can post their handouts to remind them that they are champions.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **You have many positive qualities that you may not always notice.**
- **It is possible to live your day to day life feeling more like a champion.**


The NEW CHAMPION!!
FINISH LINE

Lesson 10

Nobody's Perfect All the Time

Goal: To assist students to discover that making mistakes is normal, and to learn about how perfectionism can adversely affect self-esteem.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about the impact of mistakes on self-esteem. **Ask** the students to discuss how they feel when they make mistakes. **Ask** the students to discuss if making mistakes is normal or "bad", and **allow** the class members to say that making mistakes is bad, if they choose to do so.

2. ▲ **Ask** the students if it's possible to never make mistakes ever, and **assist** the class to determine that everyone makes at least some mistakes sometimes. **Ask** the class to identify their heros and people they admire, and **list** their responses on the board. **Ask** the students to guess at the types of mistakes these heros make, **eliciting** answers such as "Michael Jordan sometimes misses making a shot during a basketball game." At the end of the discussion, **assist** the students to recognize that even their heros make mistakes, but are not "bad" because they do so.

3. ▲ **Assist** the students to discuss what can happen to people whose self-esteem is heavily based on being "perfect", and **elicit** answers such as "they crumble when they get an exam question wrong" or "they hate themselves if they miss a shot in a game." **Offer** the students a guideline they can follow to help themselves accept making mistakes as normal and expectable: **ask** the students to find their pulses, then **say** to them, "in my class (or group), everyone with a pulse is expected to make lots of mistakes." (Do not use this guideline with suicidal youth.) To avoid some students "taking advantage" of this guideline, if necessary, **discuss** what are acceptable mistakes vs. not acceptable mistakes, and **assist** the students to determine that mistakes such as forgetting the answer to a quiz question is acceptable, but violence or aggression such as slugging a peer, is not.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Everyone makes some mistakes at least some of the time.**
- **Making mistakes is not "bad". Making mistakes is normal.**
- **Striving to be perfect and never make mistakes can lead to self-esteem problems when normal, unavoidable mistakes do occur.**
- **A guideline you can follow to stay aware that making mistakes is normal, is to check for your pulse, then remember that everyone with a pulse, makes mistakes.**

Lesson 11

On the Cover of "Esteem Magazine"

Goal: To offer students the opportunity to identify and acknowledge some of their positive attributes.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pens, markers, one copy for each student of the "Esteem Magazine" handout, paper (11"x 17" ledger-size construction paper or white paper, as well as 8-1/2" x 11" paper), staplers.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about their positive qualities. **Distribute** the copies of the "Esteem Magazine" handout and the pens and markers, then **ask** the students to fill in the handout with drawings and words that complete the magazine cover. Each student should create a magazine cover that features the student and lists some of the positive things about him or her.

2. ▲ **Distribute** the paper, then **ask** the students to create the insides of the magazine by drawing or writing some of the following items, or by creating similar articles, pictures and stories:

- Information about self-esteem.
- Stories about your accomplishments
- Pictures of your successes
- Pictures or articles on esteem
- The top ten things you like about yourself
- Your goals, dreams or hopes
- Information on how to avoid or cope with esteem problems
- Your future career choices
- Stories that describe your life now, or in the future

▲ **Assist** the students to compile their magazines using the stapler to form the magazine.

3. ▲ **Assist** the students to discuss and display their completed magazines.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

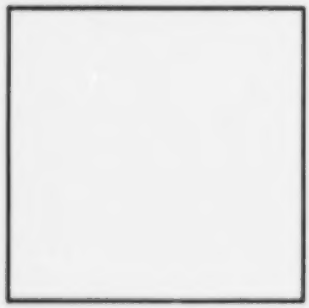
- **There are many positive things about you that are worth noticing and highlighting.**

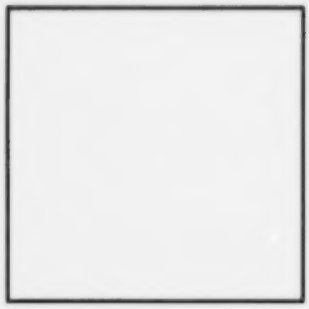
ESTEEM magazine

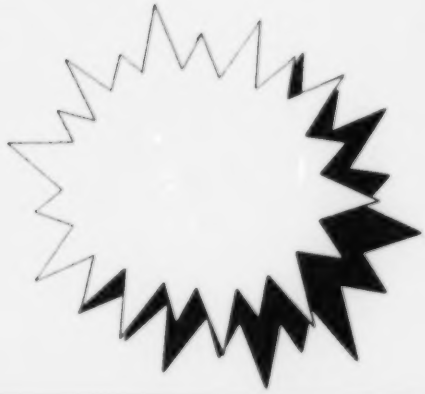
For people who know that esteem is more than just hot air

Look Who is On Our Cover!

In This Issue:







Lesson 12

Even Winners Sometimes Lose

Goal: To teach students that no one wins all the time, and that set-backs do not have to undermine esteem.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about the impact of winning and losing on self-esteem. **Ask** the students to discuss how they feel when they win or lose in games. **Elicit** answers such as "I feel crushed" or "I feel like the whole world has gone black." **Identify** to the students that some people can be profoundly impacted by whether they win or lose games, and can feel great discomfort, sadness and depression. **Retain** the list on the board for use later in the lesson.

2. ▲ **Ask** the class members to determine what happens to people who become devastated by the normal set-backs that occur. **Elicit** answers such as "they are unable to function" and "they give up." **Assist** the class to determine that these responses usually create additional problems without solving anything.

3. ▲ **Inform** the students that they can train themselves to maintain good feelings about themselves regardless of winning or losing. **Assist** the students to reconsider the list on the board, and to replace negative self-talk with positive phrases. For example, saying "I feel crushed" could be changed to "I'm disappointed but I understand it was only a game." **Assist** the students to each identify any negative self-talk they may use when they face set-backs, and to identify positive self-talk that they could substitute instead. **Ask** the students to compare the results that using positive self-talk could achieve.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Some people can be profoundly impacted by whether they win or lose games, and can feel great discomfort, sadness and depression.**
- **People who become devastated by the normal set-backs that occur, often find that these responses usually create additional problems without solving anything.**
- **You can train yourself to maintain good feelings about yourself regardless of whether you win or lose.**
- **By substituting positive self-talk for negative self-talk, you can achieve much better results whether you win or lose.**

Lesson 13

Do You Notice the Positive?

Goal: To teach students to recognize and accept the positive things about themselves.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, envelopes, pens, and paper.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning more about esteem. **Ask** the students to identify where low self-esteem can come from, and **assist** the students to determine that low self-esteem doesn't just happen, but is usually based at least in part on how others treat us. **Ask** the students to identify what people or events can help create low self-esteem, and **elicit** answers like "other kids call me names", "my cousin says I'm a jerk" or "my dad always calls me 'stupid'". **Assist** the students to notice how much they hear and accept the negative input others sometimes offer.

2. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will now have the chance to receive some positive input about themselves. **Distribute** the envelopes, pens and paper, and **ask** the students to write each other brief letters that identify some of the other student's positive qualities. **Ask** each student to write every other student once. **List** each student's name on the board.

3. ▲ **Distribute** the completed letters to the students, then **assist** them to read and discuss the letters they received. If some students resist accepting positive input, **assist** them to recognize how quickly they accept negative feedback but shy away from positive input. **Relate** this pattern to low self-esteem.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Low self-esteem doesn't just happen, but is usually based at least in part, on how others treat us.**
- **Hearing negative or harsh statements about ourselves can help create low self-esteem. Many people readily hear and accept the negative input others offer.**
- **Many people notice how quickly they will accept negative feedback but shy away from positive input.**
- **Accepting negative input but refusing positive input helps create and maintain low self-esteem.**

Lesson 14

The Top 10 Things I Like About Me

Goal: To teach students to recognize and acknowledge more of their positive qualities.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pens, a nerf ball, one copy for each student of "The Top 10 Things I Like About Me."

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning more about esteem. **Ask** the students to form a circle, then **give** one of the students a nerf ball. **Direct** the student to pass the ball to another class member; then **ask** the student who received the ball, to give one piece of positive feedback to the peer who threw the ball to him/her. **Offer** students the opportunity to request "medicores" instead of "positives" if they prefer more moderate feedback. **Assist** the students to accept the feedback that they are offered by saying "thank-you" or otherwise acknowledging the message. At the end of the exercise, **discuss** with the class members whether they found that it was easy or hard for them to accept positives, and **assist** them to understand that having some difficulty is normal, especially if you usually don't receive many positive comments.

2. ▲ **Distribute** "The Top 10 Things I Like About Me" handout and pens, then **ask** the students to complete the form by writing (or drawing) the ten things they like best about themselves. **Inform** the students that they may wish to use some of the feedback they just received from their classmates. **Discuss** the completed lists with the class, **assisting** each student to become more comfortable with their positive attributes.

3. ▲ **Discuss** with the students how they can remember the positive qualities they have discovered about themselves, and **include** the following points in the discussion:

- *It is easy to overlook your positive qualities and to return to (or begin) feeling badly about yourself.*
- *Consider posting your "Top 10" list where you will frequently see it, then the list can provide you with a regular reminder of your positive features.*
- *It is normal to have up's and down's in how you feel about yourself.*
- *If you have times when you feel badly about yourself, review your list.*
- *If you have times when you feel badly about yourself, remember the positive feedback you received from the other students.*

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **If you usually don't receive many positive comments, receiving positive feedback can feel uncomfortable. That is normal.**
- **It is easy to overlook your positive qualities and to return to (or begin) feeling badly about yourself.**
- **It is normal to have up's and down's in how you feel about yourself.**
- **If you have times when you feel badly about yourself, review your "Top 10" list or recall some of the positive feedback that others have given you.**

THE TOP 10 THINGS I LIKE ABOUT ME

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Lesson 15

Esteem: When You Care Enough to Care About Yourself

Goal: To teach students self-care, and to avoid self-blame for mistakes and set-backs.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about self-care. **Note** that there are two types of self-care that relate to esteem. **Ask** the students to discuss the first type of self-care: dress, hygiene and grooming, **focusing** on how dress, hygiene and grooming appear to reflect a person's feelings of self-worth. **Assist** the class to determine that people often equate appearance with self-worth, and **assist** the students to identify that people often equate a shabby, unkempt or dirty appearance with low self-worth. **Allow** the students to disagree with the validity of these assumptions if they wish, but **aid** the class to acknowledge that while these beliefs may be unfair and inaccurate, this type of thinking is common.

2. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about a second type of self-care. **Identify** the second aspect of self-care to be the support, nurturing and attitude the students offer to themselves. To illustrate how some people are non-nurturing, unsupportive, and negative to themselves, **review** the following scenarios. **Ask** the students to identify the attitudes, support, and nurturing shown by the scenario characters:

- *Brenda had forgotten to bring her money for lunch. "Girl, you are such a stupid air head," Brenda thought, "it serves you right to go hungry."*
- *Ramone had been up most of the night studying. Now it was Friday morning, when he normally ran 10 miles at 5 AM. After 2 hours sleep, Ramone went out in the snow to run.*
- *Soon Lee was crushed that Nicholas hadn't called. "I am such a jerk," Soon Lee thought, "if I wasn't such a twirp, he would have called again."*
- *Jack was about to interview for a job. "I can't do it," he thought, "I'm a screw-up and they'll see it."*
- *Nikita accidently ripped his favorite jacket. To punish himself he's going to just wear his sweater even though it's freezing out.*
- *Lucy lost her wallet. She thinks to herself, "I'm so stupid I don't deserve to take the bus. To teach myself a lesson, I'm gonna walk home rather than borrow the fare. I don't care if it's unsafe."*

▲ **Ask** the class to identify the specific problem behaviors used by the scenario characters, and **write** their responses on the board. **Include** actions such as name-calling, put downs, and intolerance. Ask the students to compare the self-care shown by the characters with the care these people likely offer friends, family and others. **Assist** the class to determine that the level of self-care shown by the characters is probably much poorer than the care they offer to others. **Assist** the class to identify and discuss the negative impact of these unsupportive, non-nurturing, negative behaviors.

3. ▲ **Ask** the students to discuss if they ever act negatively, or in an unsupportive, non-nurturing manner towards themselves. **Assist** the students to notice that the negativity, non-support and non-nurturing actually create new problems. **Re-examine** the scenarios to determine if the character's poor self-care approaches actually made the situations worse. **Assist** the students to recognize that the methods did make the situations worse.

▲ **Offer** the students the following guideline to follow instead of using poor self-care: *When you make a mistake or have a set-back, instead of "beating yourself up" over it, "pat yourself on the back." Keep one problem to just one problem. Don't turn one problem into two.* **Offer** this example to the class of how they could apply the guideline: Instead of yelling at yourself, you could think "Okay, I ripped my jacket, but at least I kept one problem to one problem and didn't tear it up the rest of the way. Maybe, I can get it fixed." **Assist** the students to use the guideline to re-write the scenarios, and to discuss how they could use this guideline to improve their own self-care.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Self-care includes your dress, hygiene and grooming.**
- **Self-care also includes the support, nurturing and attitude you offer yourself.**
- **When you make a mistake, instead of "beating yourself up", "pat yourself on the back." Keep one problem to just one problem. Don't turn one problem into two.**

Lesson 16

Somebody's Not Gonna' Like Me Sometime

Goal: To teach students that not everyone is going to like them, and that this does not need to lower their self-esteem.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pens, one copy for each student of "Everybody Knows Somebody Who Doesn't Like Them Sometimes" handout.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about the relationship between self-esteem and whether other people like them. **Ask** the class to discuss how they feel if they suspect someone doesn't like them. **Permit** the students to offer answers such as "I want everybody to like me" and "I feel horrible when others don't like me."

2. ▲ **Distribute** the "Everybody Knows Somebody Who Doesn't Like Them Sometimes" handout, and **ask** the students to complete it, then discuss it. **Assist** the students to determine that it is not a reasonable expectation for them to expect everybody to like them all of the time.

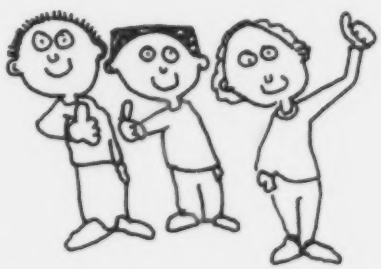
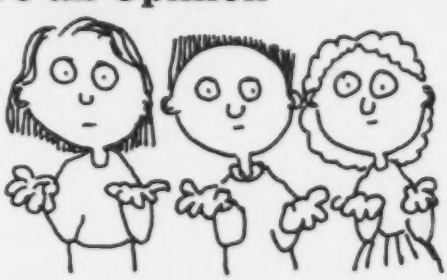
3. ▲ **Ask** the students to discuss that it's called "SELF-esteem" not "OTHER PEOPLE'S esteem", and that while other people's opinions can enhance your self-esteem, it is not meant to be the basis or foundation of self-esteem.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Many people base their esteem on whether other people like them.**
- **Many people want or expect everyone to like them.**
- **Some people may feel badly about themselves if other people appear not to like them.**
- **It is not a reasonable expectation for you to expect everybody to like you all of the time.**
- **Here is one guess about how often people will like you: About one-third will like you, about one-third will not like you, and one-third won't care.**
- **It's called "SELF-esteem" not "OTHER PEOPLE'S esteem". While other people's opinions can enhance your self-esteem, it is not meant to be the foundation of your self-esteem.**

Everybody Knows Somebody Who Doesn't Like Them Sometimes

A lot of us base our self-esteem on what others think. When someone doesn't like us, we may "cave in" and feel badly about ourselves, but the reality is, not everyone is going to like you all of the time. Here are some guesses at how many people are going to like you. If the people you know, like you at about the rates shown, that's normal. If you have many more people disliking you than the rates shown, then you may want to get some help to figure out where the problem lies. Either way, remember-- your esteem is supposed to be YOUR opinion of you.

Percentage of People	**What They Think About You**	**How Do You Compare?** Write your percentages here
33%	**Like You** 	%
33%	**Don't Like You**	%
33%	**Don't Have an Opinion** 	%

Lesson 17

If You Don't Like It, Then Change It or Accept It

Goal: To teach students to learn to accept or improve the things that they do not like about themselves.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pen, paper.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about how to best manage personal problems and concerns that can otherwise adversely affect their self-esteem. **Ask** the students to identify personal issues that could negatively impact self-esteem. **Elicit** answers such as "big feet", "bad at sports" and "can't do division." **Write** the students' responses on the board, and **discuss**. **Retain** the list for use in the next portion of the lesson.

2. ▲ **Ask** the students to sort the list on the board into "Things Someone Could Change" and "Things Someone Could Not Change". **Write** the student's answers on the board in two columns, **sorting** problems like "big feet" into the "Things Someone Could Not Change" column, and problems like "bad at sports" into the "Things Someone Could Change". As appropriate, **identify** to the students, that their complaints that change may not be easy, well-liked or fast enough, are all valid concerns, but that change remains an option, even if it may involve more hard work, time or patience than they prefer.

▲ **Assist** the students to consider the completed lists of changeable and non-changeable items, then **ask** the class if they can identify the only two options that exist for managing these concerns. **Assist** the students to determine that their choices are limited to those detailed in the following guideline; **write** this guideline on the board: *When faced with problems, you must accept the things you cannot change, and accept or change the things you could have the power to alter.* **Note** that this guideline is quite similar to the popular "serenity prayer" used by Alcoholics Anonymous and many other 12 Step groups. **Discuss** that "surrendering" to things you cannot change, such as a death or accident, is just common sense; learning to accept or change problems that you have the power to alter, can help a person better focus their energy in a problem-solving manner.

3. ▲ **Distribute** the paper and pens to the students, and ask them to each sort their own concerns into "Things Someone Could Change" and "Things Someone Could Not Change." **Inform** the students that they will not need to show their list to anyone. **Ask** the students to further sort the "Things I Could Change" list into items the student will accept, and items the student will strive to alter. **Offer** students the opportunity to discuss either their lists or what they learned; do not require students to share their lists unless they wish to.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Personal concerns can negatively impact self-esteem.**
- **Almost any personal concern can be categorized as either something you could change, or something you can not change.**
- **Changing problems that you have the power to alter, may not be easy, well-liked or fast enough, but changing is an option, even if it may involve more work, time or patience than you would really like.**
- **When faced with problems, you must accept the things you cannot change, and accept or change the things you could have the power to alter.**

Lesson 18

Try New and Improved Esteem

Goal: To assist students to notice and acknowledge improvements they have made in their levels of esteem.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, one large sheet of paper for each student (cut butcher paper or wrapping paper into pieces that are about 1 foot square in size), tape, markers, pens, one copy for each student of the "New and Improved Self-Esteem" simulated magazine advertisement handout.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about acknowledging the improvements and enhancements that they have made to their self-esteem. **Assist** each student to tape one of the large sheets of paper onto his or her back, then **ask** the class members to use the markers to write positive feedback on each other's sheets. **Assist** the students to remove, read and discuss their completed sheets.

2. ▲ **Discuss** with the class, the improvements and enhancements they have made to their self-esteem, **assisting** the class members to recognize and acknowledge their accomplishments.

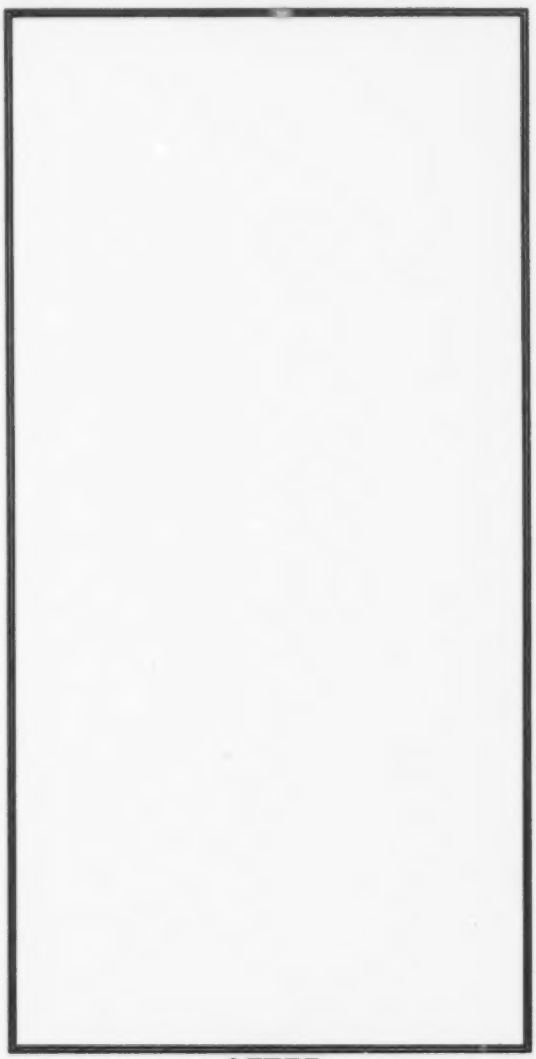
3. ▲ **Distribute** the "New and Improved Self-Esteem" handout, and **ask** the students to complete this handout by filling in the missing information on this simulated magazine advertisement for esteem. Students should add in information by drawing their "before" and "after" pictures in the spaces provided, to illustrate the improvements that they have made. **Discuss** the completed advertisements with the class, **assisting** the students to give and accept positive feedback.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **You have made many improvements and enhancements to your self-esteem. It is important to recognize and acknowledge these accomplishments.**
- **Other people can notice the changes that you have made to your self-esteem.**

New & Improved SELF-ESTEEM

BEFORE



AFTER

You too can improve YOUR self-esteem. You too can leave behind your negative, critical self, and become the positive, hopeful person you've always wanted to be.
You too can be a winner!!

Advertisement

Lesson 19

Does Life Really Fit Your Rules About Life?

Goal: To teach students that some of their beliefs about life may be inaccurate, and can undermine their self-esteem.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk, pens, one copy for each student of "The Seven Most Bogus Beliefs About Life" handout.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about how some of their beliefs about how life is "supposed" to be, can contribute to problems with self-esteem. **Distribute** the pens and the copies of "The Seven Most Bogus Beliefs About Life" to the students, and **ask** the class members to discuss each of the beliefs, one belief at a time, and to indicate if each belief is really true all the time for everybody. **Ask** the students to debunk each belief by citing examples that contradict it. For example, the class members could debunk the belief that "life is fair" by noting that child abuse, poverty and disease are all "unfair." **Discuss** the completed handout with the class, **noting** that the beliefs shown are not necessarily bad ideas, but just aren't reflective of what really happens in life.

2. ▲ **Ask** the class to determine what happens to people who hold beliefs such as those listed on the handout. **Elicit** answers such as "they are shocked when things go wrong" or "they withdraw when frustrated." **Assist** the class to determine that holding these beliefs is a problem because so much of life will not conform to these rules, and the person is left unprepared to cope effectively with the many events that contradict these beliefs.

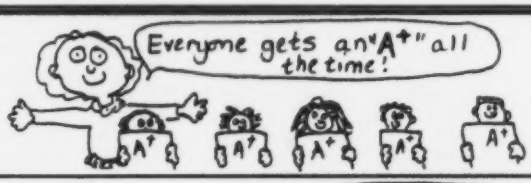
3. ▲ **Ask** the students to identify beliefs that they hold that are not very accurate. **Elicit** beliefs named on the handout, or additional items that the students cite. **Ask** the students to select alternative beliefs that would be more reflective of how life actually happens. For example, "life is fair" could become "life is sometimes fair" or "life is fair once in a while." After the students have all had the opportunity to restate their inaccurate beliefs about life, **assist** the class members to select their favorite revisions for the beliefs listed on the handout. **Write** the selected revisions on the board, then **discuss**.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Some of your beliefs about how life is "supposed" to be, can contribute to problems with self-esteem because these beliefs may not really reflect how life really happens.**
- **Holding inaccurate beliefs about life can be a problem because so much of life will not conform to these rules, and the person is left unprepared to cope effectively with the many events that contradict these beliefs.**
- **Many of your inaccurate beliefs, such as "life should be fair" may be great ideas, but these beliefs may not actually happen in the desired manner in real life.**

The Seven Most Bogus Beliefs About Life

A lot of us grow up with beliefs about the way life should be. When life is not like that, we are surprised, and our esteem sinks lower. Many of our beliefs are wonderful, but not true. Believing in rules that don't exist, makes playing the game of life pretty tough. Maybe you'll recognize your own beliefs, and come to realize that waiting for life to fit your rules, may be a very long, unending wait.

Belief	Is it really true all the time for everyone?
Life is fair 	❒ Yes ❒ No
All people are treated equally all the time	❒ Yes ❒ No
Losing is always very painful and distressing	❒ Yes ❒ No
Winning is the only thing that matters	❒ Yes ❒ No
It's possible to win all the time	❒ Yes ❒ No
If you don't win, you're a loser	❒ Yes ❒ No
Life is easy, things shouldn't go wrong or be frustrating	❒ Yes ❒ No

Lesson 20

Making Changes That Build Esteem

Goal: To provide information to students on how to successfully make changes and set goals.

Materials: Chalkboard, chalk.

1. ▲ **Inform** the students that they will be learning about how to best make changes and set goals they can really reach. **Note** that self-esteem is often enhanced by successfully making needed changes, while esteem can be hurt when needed changes seem impossible to accomplish. **Ask** the students to identify the problems they typically encounter when they set goals or plan changes. **Elicit** answers such as "I never follow through" or "it's too hard." **Inform** the students that those are common complaints, and that they can learn to more often successfully make the changes they desire.

2. ▲ **Offer** the students the following pointers for successfully making changes, and **discuss** each point, one at a time, **writing** the information on the board:

- *Set a goal that you can really do.*
- *Allow enough time to complete your goal.*
- *Break the goal into manageable steps.*
- *Check with others who have completed similar goals and get their feedback on your plan.*
- *Have a back-up plan so if you have problems, instead of giving up, you'll just use a different way.*
- *Build in some rewards for the steps you accomplish.*
- *Don't hassle yourself for missing deadlines; instead commend yourself for what you have accomplished.*
- *Aim for very small steps that you can do successfully rather than large steps you'll never complete.*
- *Be patient with yourself. People change in an up-and-down manner, not all at once, and not always very fast or easily.*
- *Find a buddy to help you with your changes. Get a couple buddies to support you, if needed.*

3. ▲ **Assist** the students to determine how they could apply the pointers to their own personal change strategies. **Ask** the students to each select a small, do-able goal that they could attempt to do using the pointers. **Assist** each student to discuss his/her plan with the class, focusing on how the student could formulate and actually implement a successful plan.

4. ▲ **Review the major points of this lesson:**

- **Self-esteem is often enhanced by successfully making needed changes. Esteem can be hurt when needed changes seem impossible to accomplish.**
- **Many common problems people have when working to make changes, can be expected and avoided.**
- **Some steps to successful goal setting include: setting a goal that you can really do; allowing enough time; breaking the goal into steps; checking with others who have completed similar goals; having a back-up plan; building in rewards; commending yourself for what you accomplish; picking very small steps; being patient; and remembering that people change in an up-and-down manner.**

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